

**CITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS/STUDY SESSION MINUTES
February 22, 2011**

The Business/Study Session of the Monroe City Council was held on February 22, 2011, in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Robert Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Councilpersons present: Balk, Rodriguez, Cudaback, Tuttle, Stima, Williams, and Goering.

Staff present: Brazel, Feilberg, Quenzer, Nelson, Wright, Farrell, and Martinson.

City Attorney Zach Lell was not present.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilperson Goering entered Council Chambers at 7:03 p.m.

BUSINESS & ACTION ITEMS

There were no Business & Action items.

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

Julie (no last name given) of Monroe, read from a letter explaining that, after a wine tasting party with friends, she was arrested by the State Patrol for drunk driving. She looked at the handcuffs and never dreamed she would be a person arrested. She realized that she could have hurt someone and knew she needed to quit drinking. This didn't affect just her, but her whole family. She sought treatment and hasn't had a drink for a year. She has told her wine tasting friends that it's not worth it. She lost a job driving seniors, due to the DUI. She is deeply embarrassed and deeply sorry. A Monroe police officer was following her that night, and she is glad she can thank him. She explained about her one-year coin representing her sobriety and she presented her coin and a plaque to say "Thank You" to Monroe Police Officer Stamey.

Mayor Zimmerman explained the purpose of this meeting was to review the North Kelsey Plan. It's not intended as a meeting for support or opposition for any particular project. It may help with future decisions in North Kelsey. He explained that anyone who would like to speak tonight would be included as part of the public hearing on March 15, 2011.

Carl Griffith, 300 Powell Street, Monroe, stated that the City needs to start rubberstamping projects and get them moving. If Walmart wants to come in, they will come in. If they come in, Monroe gains a 155,000 square-foot store and revenue will be gained for the budget, for parks, and the Police Department. Utility tax and sewer could be lowered.

Kay George, 1304 Skywall Drive, Sultan, stated that she and friends are happy to see Walmart coming. There are people who may be affected. She lost her real estate business; but is happy in her new job. This great nation is built on capitalism.

Frank Parsons, 17022 155th Street SE, Monroe, feels that certain people and corporations want to control the market and what people pay for goods. He believes in the free enterprise system, which means that anyone can set up a business and make a go of it. Walmart is America born; we should give the right to them. It will mean more jobs, reduce unemployment, more revenue for Monroe, stimulate the economy, bring in other businesses, increase competition, and keep costs down.

Cheryl Smith 15218 182nd Avenue SE, Monroe, is against Walmart and doesn't want Monroe to fall due to short-term thinking. She is concerned about traffic, and small businesses, and air pollution. She cited the *State Environmental Policy Act* and suggested using it as a tool to prove "incompatible land use". She asked Council, when weighing pros and cons, to look at other than revenue and jobs.

Roger Swenson, 22415 132nd Street SE, Monroe, is in favor of Walmart, as there will be an expanded variety of goods locally. Walmart will provide more competition and lower prices. No stores are hurt by good, honest competition. Walmart will provide jobs and revenue, which the City needs. Traffic issues are not peculiar to Walmart.

Kris Jensen, lives in Kirkland but owns a business in Monroe on Kelsey. She hasn't had one client that wants a Walmart down the street. The biggest concern is traffic. Half of her clients who come from Kirkland, Bellevue, or Woodinville won't come to Monroe, except in the morning. Traffic planning has to be part of this. She had a family member work for Walmart, who will never work for them again, due to low wages.

Bill Clark, PO Box 165, Monroe, started out on Main Street when it was a compact community and everyone knew everyone. Then Highway 2 came, gas stations went to Highway 2, which didn't hurt downtown. He can't see that a large store will make that big of a problem. You can't stop progress; you need to plan for progress.

Mick Burch, PO Box 662, Sultan, believes that Walmart is good for the community. He drives to Arlington to shop there. Walmart will be a hub that will draw shoppers from other areas. Revenue and jobs will be a big plus

Rosie Tatel, 14969 174th Ave SE, Monroe, is against Walmart and asked Council to picture traffic backing up at the railroad tracks. She is concerned that there won't be a separate lane on the new overpass.

Shannon Stowell, 205 N. Madison Street, Monroe, asked Council what other retail or business options were approached by the City. He would like to bring other ideas. He brought a copy of the latest "Economist", with an article called "Stripped" about vacancy rates and stores that are moving into cities.

Tom Green 13400 132nd St SE, Sultan, has an RV and has parked at many Walmart stores as he travels. People don't come all at one time; they come in and out all day long. When they go to Walmart, they also go to restaurants that are nearby. Money will come in from all over the country, due to other RV travelers.

Tim Rutherford, 20355 Corbridge Road SE, asked how many people went shopping or to a restaurant today. By choosing that store or restaurant, they essentially boycotted other

stores and restaurants. Walmart sponsors many organizations and will be good for our community.

A letter from the Residents of Village East Apartments was submitted for the record in support of a Walmart in Monroe. They appreciate getting prescriptions filled for \$4.00 and the affordable prices for groceries and clothing. They feel that the traffic Walmart will bring will also be good for other businesses. They hope Council will support bringing in Walmart. The following people signed the letter (some signature were not legible; therefore some may not be spelled correctly):

Betty Hendricks	Liz Ton	Mary Ellen Buchannon	Olive Hall
Wyn Rare	Jane Kelly	Ben Rice	Jenny Sutz
Shirley Holloway	Sharlene Jenkins	Lois Scovell	June Hiaten
Shirley Soriano	Magna Payne	Carol Presley	Van Brenk
Georgia Smart	Jeanne Trainor	Marjorie Mills	

Mayor Zimmerman explained that the Council's responsibility is to look at the plan and see what possibilities fit into the North Kelsey Plan. Comments have been made to stick to original intent. The decision coming up needs to be made based on what the plan intended.

STUDY SESSION ITEMS

North Kelsey Vision

Public Works Director Feilberg gave a brief overview of the plan, explaining that in 2003, the North Kelsey planning area was developed. Since it was adopted in 2003, the configuration changed slightly. The North Kelsey planning area became slightly larger, along with the Planned Development area. The development plan includes six goals and objectives and a set of design guidelines. Some objectives were to allow for big box retail stores. He explained other guidelines outlined in the North Kelsey Design Guidelines and the anticipated peak hour trips for traffic.

After discussion, Mayor Zimmerman stated that it wasn't a decision to make lightly and that Council needed to ask if it meets the guidelines of the North Kelsey Development Plan.


Draft Agenda/March 1, 2011 Council Business Meeting

City Administrator Brazel presented the agenda for the March 1, 2011 Council Business Meeting.

After a comment about Council Committees, it was agreed that staff would provide Councilmembers with a complete list of Council Committees..

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:25 p.m.


Eadye Martinson, Deputy City Clerk


Robert G. Zimmerman, Mayor